



(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11) Publication number: 0 561 472 A1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number: 93200780.0

(51) Int. Cl.5: C08L 95/00

(22) Date of filing: 17.03.93

(30) Priority: 18.03.92 US 853645

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(43) Date of publication of application:
22.09.93 Bulletin 93/38

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(34) Designated Contracting States:
BE DE ES FR GB IT NL

(54) Water-based emulsions and dispersions of bitumen modified with a functionalized block copolymer.

(57) A bitumen emulsion comprising (a) bitumen, (b) water, (c) optionally at least one emulsifier, and (d) a conjugated diene block copolymer containing functional groups which have a strong affinity for water.

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This invention relates to emulsions and dispersions of bitumen modified with functionalized block copolymers. More particularly, it relates to such emulsions and dispersions containing acrylic monomer-containing block copolymers or maleic anhydride functionalized block copolymers.

Asphalt is a common material utilized for the preparation of paving and roofing materials and also for coatings such as pipe coatings and tank liners. While the material is suitable in many respects, it inherently is deficient in some physical properties which it would be highly desirable to improve. Diene polymer rubbers such as styrene-butadiene rubber and styrene-rubber block copolymers such as styrene-butadiene-styrene and styrene-isoprene-styrene block copolymers have been used to dramatically improve the thermal and mechanical properties of asphalts.

Bitumen emulsions and dispersions have been known for some time. They are heterogeneous 2-phase systems consisting of 2 immiscible materials, bitumen and water. The bitumen is dispersed throughout the continuous water phase in the form of discreet globules which are held in suspension by an emulsifier. Such bitumen emulsions and dispersions have a wide variety of uses such as in road construction, horticultural and agricultural applications, slip coats for concrete, protective coats for concrete, pipelines and ironwork and also for sealing cracks and grouting.

Bitumen emulsions and dispersions containing the polymers discussed above are known. Such emulsions and dispersions have the advantage that such polymers ordinarily give to the bitumen alone. However, such emulsions and dispersions have the following disadvantages: they are not sufficiently stable, they may coalesce, irreversibly flocculate or settle or cream, the coalesced bitumen phase has poor properties after water drying and they are difficult to prepare at high polymer loading. These disadvantages are most likely caused by the lack of affinity that the nonpolar polymers have for water.

It is also known to make emulsions and dispersions of the polymers discussed above in water with a surfactant and then add the polymer emulsions and dispersions to bitumen to obtain improved properties. Addition of a polymer emulsion or dispersion to bitumen provides a means of mixing polymer and bitumen which does not require special high shear high temperature mixing equipment. It does not put the polymer and bitumen through an unnecessary heating step. However, when this process is used, it is often difficult to prepare polymer emulsions and dispersions which are stable or ones with very small dispersed polymer particles. This is because of the lack of affinity of these block copolymers for water. A small dis-

persed polymer particle improves mixing of polymer and bitumen.

Therefore, there is a need for bitumen emulsions and dispersions and bitumen compositions containing polymer emulsions and dispersions which contain polymers which have a strong affinity for water. The present invention provides such emulsions and dispersions and compositions.

This invention relates to an improved bitumen-polymer emulsion comprising bitumen, water, optionally at least one emulsifier and a conjugated diene block copolymer containing functional groups which have a strong affinity for water. The term "emulsion" as used throughout this description encompasses both emulsions and dispersions, i.e. both 2-phase systems with a dispersed liquid phase (emulsion) and 2-phase systems with a solid dispersed phase (dispersion). In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the block copolymer comprises at least one conjugated diene block and at least one acrylic monomer block, said acrylic monomer block providing the functional groups which have a strong affinity for water. In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the block copolymer contains at least one conjugated diene block and at least one vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon block whereby the functionality is provided by grafting carboxylic acid groups or their anhydrides onto the diene block of the polymer.

It will be appreciated that the emulsions according to the present invention also encompass bituminous compositions which comprise bitumen and polymer emulsions, comprising the block copolymer, water and optionally at least one emulsifier.

The bituminous component in the bituminous-polymer emulsions according to the present invention may be a naturally occurring bitumen or derived from a mineral oil. Also, petroleum derivatives obtained by a cracking process, pitch and coal tar can be used as the bituminous component as well as blends of various bituminous materials. In principle, any bitumen may be used.

Examples of suitable components include distillation or "straight-run bitumens", precipitation bitumens, e.g. propane bitumens, blown bitumens and mixtures thereof. Other suitable bituminous components include mixtures of one or more of these bitumens with extenders such as petroleum extracts, e.g. aromatic extracts, distillates or residues, or with oils.

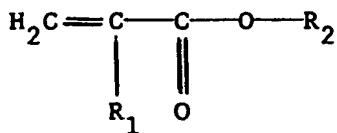
As is well known, polymers containing both aromatic and ethylenic unsaturation can be prepared by copolymerizing one or more polyolefins, particularly a conjugated diene, such as butadiene and isoprene, with one or more vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon monomers, such as styrene. Other conjugated dienes such as 2,3-dimethyl-1,3-butadi-

ene, 1,3-pentadiene, 1,3-hexadiene and the like, and other vinyl aromatic hydrocarbons such as o-methylstyrene, p-methylstyrene, p-tertbutylstyrene, 1,3-dimethylstyrene, alphamethylstyrene, vinyl-naphthalene, vinylanthracene and the like may be used.

Polymers containing ethylenic unsaturation or both aromatic and ethylenic unsaturation may be prepared using free-radical, cationic and anionic initiators or polymerization catalysts. Such polymers may be prepared using the conventional bulk, solution or emulsion techniques. Block copolymers containing ethylenic unsaturation and polymers containing both aromatic and ethylenic unsaturation are, of course, available commercially from several suppliers.

In general, the conjugated diene block copolymers may be prepared by any method known in the art. For instance, the block copolymers may be produced by any well known block polymerization or copolymerization procedures including the well known sequential addition of monomer techniques, incremental addition of monomer technique or coupling technique as illustrated in, for example, U.S. Patent Nos. 3,251,905, 3,390,207, 3,598,887 and 4,219,627. As is well known in the block copolymer art, tapered copolymer blocks can be incorporated in the multiblock copolymer by copolymerizing a mixture of conjugated diene and vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon monomers utilizing the difference in their copolymerization reactivity rates. Various patents describe the appropriation of multiblock copolymers containing tapered copolymer blocks including U.S. Patent Nos. 3,251,905, 3,265,765, 3,639,521 and 4,208,356. If desired, these block copolymers can be hydrogenated. Hydrogenation may be effected selectively as disclosed in U.S. Patent Nos. Reissue 27,145 and 5,039,755. The hydrogenation of these polymers and copolymers may be carried out by a variety of well established processes including hydrogenation in the presence of such catalysts as Raney Nickel, noble metals such as platinum and the like, soluble transition metal catalysts and titanium catalysts. The residual unsaturation should be less than 20%, preferably less than 5% and most preferably as close to zero as possible.

The preferred polymers, which may be used according to the present invention, are block polymers of at least one conjugated diene and at least one acrylic monomer with the structure:



where R₁ is hydrogen, phenyl or an alkyl radical which is linear or branched and has from 1 to 10 carbon atoms and R₂ is an alkyl radical which preferably is branched at the first carbon atom, has from 1 to 14 carbon atoms, may contain a tertiary amine or an ether linkage and may be a cyclic hydrocarbon. These polymers are functionalized in that they contain, in the polymer backbone, acrylic, especially methacrylate, functionality. This provides the polymer with strongly reactive and interactive chemical groups. In the formula above, it is important that R₂ be branched at the first carbon, because branching makes the monomer easier to polymerize.

The present invention encompasses polymers which are both high and low in molecular weight, as well as in between. High molecular weight polymers include those up to several million molecular weight as defined by gel permeation chromatography (GPC) peak molecular weight of the main species. Low molecular weight polymers include those of only 1000 molecular weight or even less. In all cases these polymers contain both conjugated dienes and acrylic monomers (alkyl methacrylates).

Even more preferred base polymers are block copolymers of conjugated dienes, acrylic monomers, such as alkyl methacrylates or their derivatives, and vinyl aromatic hydrocarbons. Such block copolymers may be multiblock copolymers of varying structures containing various ratios of the monomers including those containing up to 60% by weight of vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon. At higher vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon contents, the polymers are not very compatible with bitumens. Thus, multiblock copolymers may be utilized which are linear or radial, symmetric or asymmetric, and which have structures represented by the formulae, ABAC, ABC, BC, BAC, CABAC, CBC, (BC)_nX, (CB)_nX, (BC)_nXA_m, (CB)_nXA_m, (BC)_nXB_m, (CB)_nXB_m, etc. where A is the vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon, B is the diene, C is the acrylic monomer, X is a coupling agent and n and m are integers from 1 to 50. These are just some of the structures possible. Their finite number is not meant to limit the scope of the invention. It is not necessary, but B can be a polymer block of a conjugated diene that has been hydrogenated.

It may be desirable to acid functionalize these block copolymers containing methacrylate block(s). However, the routes to acid functionalizing involve exposing the polymer to: (1) heat which eliminates isobutylene to form methacrylic acid, or (2), hydrolysis of the ester group by heating (70-90 °C) a polymer solution in the presence of an acid or acid catalyst. Both routes can degrade and/or crosslink unsaturated rubber. In order to circumvent this problem the conjugated diene block may be hy-

drogenated. An alternative route for acid functionalization of styrene-conjugated diene block copolymers is sequentially polymerizing a segment of polymethacrylate onto one end of the styrene-conjugated diene block copolymer to make an "ABC" type polymer. The acid functionality can then be made in situ during the acid wash stage of catalyst removal.

The preferred polymers for use herein are block copolymers which contain a block of conjugated diene and a block of alkyl methacrylate because such polymers have a portion which is compatible with asphalt and another portion which is compatible with water. By compatible it is meant that a portion shows a strong affinity for, attraction to or solubility with the asphalt or water.

These acrylic monomer containing block copolymers may be produced by any well known block polymerization or copolymerization procedures including the well-known sequential addition of monomer techniques, incremental addition of monomer technique or coupling technique. As is well known in the block copolymer art, tapered copolymer blocks can be incorporated in the multiblock copolymer by copolymerizing a mixture of conjugated diene and vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon monomers utilizing the difference in their copolymerization reactivity rates. The manufacture of such polymers containing alkyl methacrylates is described in e.g. U.S. Patent No. 5,002,676 and European patent application No. 0,458,379.

Alkyl methacrylates are preferred for use herein and those employed herein include methacrylates wherein the alkyl group has up to 14 carbon atoms inclusive. Derivatives of these polymers are also included herein, such as, for example, polymers with partially or completely acidified methacrylate groups, their anhydrides, their ionomers, their reaction products with alcohols and amines, and the like. Derivatives of alkyl methacrylates include methacrylic acid, methacrylic acid salts (for example, zinc, sodium and quaternary ammonium salts) and anhydrides formed between adjacent and non-adjacent acid units by heating. It should be noted that derivatization of the methacrylate group can be carried out prior to adding the polymer to bitumen or water, or in situ after the polymer is added to bitumen or water. The in situ reaction requires a reactive ester group such as t-butyl or 1,1-dimethyl alkyl ester. Catalysts such as acids and bases can be added to aid the in situ conversion in bitumen or water. Illustrative of such methacrylate esters are methyl methacrylate, ethyl methacrylate, sec-butyl methacrylate, t-butyl methacrylate, i-amyl methacrylate, hexyl methacrylate, decyl methacrylate and dodecyl methacrylate. Largely because of ease of polymerization, the preferred

alkyl methacrylates are branched-butyl methacrylates, i.e., iso-butyl methacrylate and t-butyl methacrylate. The desired poly(alkyl methacrylate) block is produced by directly polymerizing the corresponding alkyl methacrylate monomer or alternatively the desired block is obtained by polymerizing a more easily polymerizable methacrylate and subsequently transesterifying the product to introduce the desired alkyl group. It is also possible to copolymerize either randomly or sequentially two or more acrylic monomers to form the desired block. Tertiary butyl methacrylate (TBMA) is the most preferred acrylic monomer because of ease of purification and polymerization, and because it undergoes thermolysis at temperatures as low as about 180°C.

The amount of acrylic monomer in the preferred polymers of the present invention may be as little as 0.1% by weight and the advantages of the present invention will still be achieved. The amount of acrylic monomer in the polymer may range all the way up to 80% or even as high as 99% by weight but the high cost of the acrylic monomer may, in commercial practice, dictate that lower levels should be used. It is preferred that from 0.5 to 50% by weight be used in the polymer because of cost and because the polymer must have sufficient amounts of water attracting and asphalt attracting portions. It is noted that a water soluble polymer could be prepared at very high acrylic monomer contents (greater than 50% by weight) and through derivatization, and that the emulsions and compositions of the present invention can be prepared with such polymers using them as polymeric surfactants. The molecular weight of these polymers may range from 1,000 to 1,000,000, preferably 4,000 to 1,000,000 because low molecular weight anionically produced polymers are expensive. The molecular weight of the acrylic monomer block may range all the way up to 300,000. Lower molecular weight acrylic monomers blocks are advantageous at the present time from a cost standpoint.

The specific structure of the acrylic monomer-containing polymer of interest depends upon the application of interest. For example, ionomers, (partially or completely neutralized), i.e. salt forms of acidified TBMA-containing polymers will give greater water solubility than acidified analogs which, in turn, will give greater water solubility than their alkyl esters.

Polymers which greatly enhance the flow resistance of asphalt in addition to improving properties associated with the acrylic monomer group may be utilized. These polymers should have two or more vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon blocks, preferably polystyrene blocks. These polymers should have a vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon content of less than

60%, so that they are compatible with asphalt and greater than 10%, so that they will provide flow resistance at reasonable molecular weight. They should have molecular weights greater than 30,000, so that they improve flow resistance at low use levels and less than 1,000,000, so that they are compatible and readily mixable with asphalt. The 1,000,000 molecular weight limit refers to linear structures. Radial or star polymer with from three to fifty arms are also envisioned. Their uncoupled precursor should have a molecular weight below 500,000. After coupling, they could have a molecular weight of up to 50 times 500,000, i.e. up to 25,000,000.

The above described acrylic monomer polymers provide functional groups which have strong affinity for water to the polymers. Of course, it is the acrylic monomers themselves which are the functional groups. The functional groups which have a strong affinity for water may also be provided by incorporating acids or anhydrides or derivatives thereof into a block copolymer of a conjugated diene and a vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon by grafting such groups onto the polymer. In this case, it is preferred that the functional groups be grafted onto the diene block of the polymer.

The acid functionalized block copolymers of the present invention may be either hydrogenated or unhydrogenated block copolymers as described above which have been reacted with various acid functional group-containing molecules. The acid functional group containing molecules which may be reacted with such block copolymers to produce a functionalized block copolymer useful in the present invention include acid or anhydride groups or derivatives thereof. Functionalized polymers containing carboxyl groups reacted onto the vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon block are described in U.S. Patent 4,868,245. The preferred acid monomers for functionalizing the polymers of the present invention are those which can be grafted onto the diene block of the polymer in free radical initiated reactions. Such preferred monomers include acids or anhydrides or derivatives thereof such as carboxylic acid groups and their salts, anhydrides, esters, imide groups, amide groups, acid chlorides and the like. Such monomers and functionalized polymers incorporating them are described in U.S. Patent 4,578,429. The preferred modifying monomers are unsaturated mono- and polycarboxylic-containing acids and anhydrides and other derivatives thereof. Examples of such monomers include maleic acid, maleic anhydride, fumaric acid and the other materials mentioned in said U.S. Patent No. 4,578,429. Sulfonic acid functionalized polymers, such as described in U.S. 4,086,171 may also be used. The functionalized block copolymers can be subsequently reacted with other modifying materials to

produce new functionalized polymers which work in the present invention. For example, the reaction products of an anhydride functionalized polymer with ammonia or a dialkylamino propylamine are an imide and tertiary amine functional polymer respectively.

The acid functionalized block copolymers utilized should contain at least 0.1% by weight of the functional groups because this ensures the desired improvement is obtained. Preferably, from 0.5 to 30% by weight of functional groups should be present in the polymer. It is difficult to prepare acid functionalized polymers by this method with higher levels of functional groups.

The bitumen emulsions of the present invention can be manufactured using any of the well known methods used for manufacturing prior art bitumen emulsions. Many bitumen emulsions are manufactured commercially using colloidal mills in a continuous process. The bitumen is heated and blended with the polymer containing the functional groups by mixing in high or low shear mechanical mixers. The type of mixer required depends on the bitumen and polymer chosen. If it is to be used, a solution of the emulsifier in water is prepared. If an emulsifier is not used, water is used rather than the emulsifier solution. The method of adding the emulsifier to the water varies. Some emulsifiers, such as amines, must be mixed and reacted with an acid, e.g. hydrochloric acid, to attain water solubility, whereas others, such as fatty acids, must be mixed and reacted with an alkali, e.g. sodium hydroxide, to attain water solubility.

The hot bitumen and optional emulsifier solution (or water) are mixed together, e.g. by being fed in separately but simultaneously into a colloid mill. The temperatures of the two components will vary depending upon the grade and percentage of bitumen in the emulsion, the type of emulsifier, etc. Generally, bitumen temperatures in the range of 100°C to 140°C are used. It can be desirable with bitumen containing very high levels of polymer to use higher temperatures, up to 250°C. The temperature of the water phase is adjusted so that the temperature of the emulsion produced is usually not greater than 100°C. It can be desirable to use pressurized mills and heat exchangers when very high (>140°C) bitumen temperatures are used. The two phases are mixed together, e.g. in the colloid mill they are subjected to intense shearing forces which cause the bitumen to break into small globules. The individual globules are then coated with the emulsifier which gives the surface of the droplets an electrical charge (in the case of anionic or cationic emulsifiers) and the resulting electrostatic forces prevent the globules from coalescing. Excess water may be removed from the emulsion by heating. Solvents and oils may be added to the

bitumen to reduce viscosity prior to emulsification. Solvents can also be removed by heating. The presence of the block copolymer with functional groups which possess a strong attraction for water significantly enhances the ease of preparing these emulsions.

Generally, the bitumen emulsions of the present invention contain from 5 to 90% by weight of dispersed phase, i.e. the bitumen plus polymer (plus other additives), and 10 to 95% by weight of water phase, i.e. the water plus surfactant. It is preferred that greater than 30% by weight dispersed phase be used so that films prepared from the emulsion lose water easily via evaporation, and also to reduce shipping costs of the emulsion.

The dispersed phase of the emulsion generally will contain 80 to 99.995% by weight bitumen and 0.005 to 20% by weight of the polymer based on a total of 100% of bitumen plus polymer. If other components are added to the dispersed phase composition prior to emulsification, for example other block copolymers, then the above concentration limits based only on bitumen plus block copolymer with functional group still hold. The polymer should be present in amounts within this range to see an effect and so that the emulsion is not too costly.

The water phase of the emulsion optionally will contain an emulsifier, i.e. from 0.001 to 10% by weight of an emulsifier (surfactant) or mix of emulsifiers and the rest water. If other components are added to the water phase, for example a water soluble thickener, then the above concentration limit based only on emulsifier plus water still holds.

One wants to use low molecular weight emulsifiers at as low a concentration as possible to give stable emulsions because they are expensive and can hurt film properties. There are a variety of surfactants currently available for use in bitumen emulsions which are very effective at concentrations between 0.001 to 2% by weight of the surfactants plus water. However, with the appropriate block copolymers with functional groups it is possible that no additional emulsifier is required, i.e. the block copolymer with functional groups acts as the emulsifier.

These emulsions may generally be used for all of the standard uses for bituminous emulsions. A variety of such uses are described in The Shell Bitumen Handbook edited by D. Whiteoak and published by Shell Bitumen U.K. in the United Kingdom in 1990. Other uses for these emulsions and dispersions include roof coatings, interply adhesives for roofing felts and roll products, paving chip seal binders, paving slurry seal binders, additives in recycled asphalt pavements, binders for cold prepared asphaltic concrete, fiberglass mat binders and the like.

5 Polymer emulsions and methods for making them are well known. Generally, such emulsions, or latexes as they are sometimes called, are made by first making a polymer cement comprising a minor proportion of the polymer in a suitable solvent such as cyclohexane. Such polymer cements are often available directly from the polymerization reactor. The polymer cement is emulsified by adding the polymer cement to water which contains at least one emulsifier or surfactant which is present to promote the emulsification. The solvent and the excess water are stripped away, leaving behind a polymer emulsion or latex. Another method of making these emulsions is emulsion polymerization of the polymer. In making the polymer emulsions of the compositions of the present invention, the significant difference is that the polymer is one which contains functional groups which have a strong affinity for water.

10 Next, the bitumen and the polymer emulsion are mixed together. This may be accomplished by a variety of methods including addition of polymer emulsion to an already formed bitumen emulsion, addition of polymer emulsion to molten bitumen and emulsification of bitumen using the polymer emulsion as the water phase. Addition of polymer emulsion to molten bitumen is preferred because it gives the greatest mixing of polymer and bitumen.

15 The polymer emulsion will generally contain from 5 to 90% by weight of the polymer, from 0.001 to 10% by weight of the emulsifier, if it is used, and the balance water. At least this amount of the polymer is necessary because water and emulsifier do not contribute to the final properties of the dried composition but do contribute to cost. Generally no more than 90% by weight is desired because the emulsion becomes too viscous to process. It is preferred that from 40 to 80% by weight be used for the same reasons. The emulsifier should be used in an amount from 0.001 to 10% by weight because it is expensive and often hurts or does not contribute to the final properties of the dried composition.

20 In the final composition, the bitumen plus polymer should be present in an amount of from 5 to 90% by weight and the water plus surfactant should be present in an amount of from 10 to 95% by weight. The polymer should constitute 0.005 to 20% by weight of the polymer plus bitumen, and the emulsifier, if used, should constitute 0.001 to 10% by weight of the emulsifier plus water. The reasons are the same as given above for bitumen emulsions.

25 These polymer or non-asphaltic water based emulsions and dispersions of block copolymers containing functional groups having a strong affinity for water have a variety of uses. Examples include roof coatings, as the water phase for use in emul-

sifying bitumen, as a blend ingredient with bituminous emulsions, as a modifier for hot mix asphalt concrete in which the emulsion is added to the asphalt in the hot mix plant and as a modifier for bitumen in which the emulsion is added to molten bitumen and the water boiled off.

A variety of conventional emulsifiers or surfactants and mixtures of emulsifiers or surfactants can be used to stabilize both the bitumen emulsions and the polymer emulsions. Such surfactants include anionic and nonionic surfactants and finally divided solids. Surfactant types and specific examples thereof of those that are useful in the present invention include cationics, anionics, nonionics, bentonites and clays. The cationics most widely used are salts of fatty amines, amido amines and imidazolines. The anionics most widely used are salts of fatty acids, rosin acids, lignin sulphonates and the like. Mixtures of such emulsifiers may be used. These surfactants and others useful herein are described in e.g. U.S. Patents Nos. 1,302,810 and 3,565,842; U.K. Patent No. 1,338,447 Surfactants and Interfacial Phenomena, edited by M.J. Rosen and published by John Wiley & Sons of New York in 1989, pages 1-32; Journal of Physical Chemistry, 34, by R. M. Woodman and E. Taylor, 1930, page 299; and Asphalt Science and Technology, by E.J. Barth, published by Gordon and Breach in 1962. The preferred emulsifiers depend upon the application. For example, cationics are often used in paving applications because they improve breaking rates and adhesion to aggregate.

The polymer and bitumen emulsions of the present invention can be formulated with solvents, oils, fluxes, antioxidants, fillers and other polymers and block polymers prior to forming the water based emulsions or dispersions. They also can be formulated with water soluble thickeners, pigments, pigment dispersing aids, other water based emulsions and dispersions, and the like. The antioxidants can be water soluble and fillers include carbon black and titanium dioxide as well as other commonly used fillers including crushed limestone, talc and fumed silica.

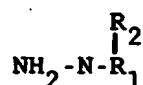
In order to achieve the advantages of the present invention, it is important that the functional groups which are present in the block copolymers be functional groups which possess a strong attraction for water. The functional groups should have a strong attraction for water. In short, they should be water soluble.

One can define a functional group to be a portion of a molecule which contains atom types in addition to hydrogen and carbon. Thus, examples of functional groups are carboxylic acid (-COOH), hydroxyl (-OH), primary amine (-NH₂), etc. Low molecular weight molecules with roughly equal amounts by weight of hydrocarbon portion and

functional group portion (which possess a strong attraction for water) will exhibit at least some solubility or miscibility with water. Thus, for example, as shown in The Merck Index published by Merck & Co., Inc., maleic acid, maleic anhydride, acrylic acid, ethylamine, methanol, etc. are highly soluble or miscible with water. Tertiary butyl methacrylate has a water solubility of 0.05% at 20 °C.

Alternatively, the functional group can be defined as the monomer, for example tertiary butyl methacrylate or maleic anhydride, which is added to or inserted into the block copolymer by polymerization or grafting as described above. In this case the functional group which possesses a strong attraction for water will exhibit at least some (non-zero) solubility or miscibility with water.

A strong attraction for water can be obtained, for example, by hydrogen bonding or ionic interaction. Groups capable of hydrogen bonding include acids, amines, hydroxyls and the like. Groups capable of ionic interaction include metal and ammonium salts of acids and salts of amines. Derivatives of functional groups originally placed on the block copolymers also are encompassed within the scope of this invention. One example of such a derivative is the amido alkyl amine derivative of an acid functional group which is obtained by reacting a block copolymer which contains acid groups with a diamine compound of the structure



where R₁ and R₂ are aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, aromatic or alkyl-substituted aromatic hydrocarbon radicals having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms. Further, the original acid containing block copolymer can be converted to a block copolymer with anionic groups by reaction with a base such as sodium hydroxide and can be converted to a block copolymer with cationic groups by first reacting it with a diamine and then with an acid to get the amine salt. Other examples of such derivatives which can be used herein include ester derivatives of an acid functional group obtained by reaction of a block copolymer with acid groups with a compound containing at least one hydroxyl group. The functional group can be modified during formation of the emulsion, for example, an acid-containing polymer at the surface of an emulsion particle can be converted to an acid salt by having a base in the water phase.

The invention is further illustrated by the following examples, however, without restricting the scope of the present invention to these specific embodiments.

EXAMPLE 1

Two block copolymers were used. The first, prior art polymer A, is a selectively hydrogenated, sequentially polymerized, styrene-butadiene-styrene with polystyrene content of 29% by weight, total molecular weight of 52,000 and residual unsaturation less than 2%. The second, polymer B, was prepared by grafting onto polymer A approximately 2% by weight of maleic anhydride according to the method as described in U.S. Patent No. 4,578,429.

An AC-5 grade asphalt was prepared by blending road flux and propane deasphalted material. Both came from the Shell Deer Park Refinery.

The two polymers were blended at 10%w (% by weight) with the asphalt at 200°C for 75 minutes with a high shear laboratory Silverson mixer. The surfactant in water solution was prepared with 1.5% w oleic acid and 0.53% w sodium hydroxide in distilled water. The sodium hydroxide was first added to the water. This solution was heated to 50°C, then oleic acid was added dropwise while stirring. The solution was allowed to cool. Thus the surfactant used was sodium oleate (anionic surfactant) with a molar excess of sodium hydroxide.

The asphalt and polymer modified asphalts were heated and controlled at 160°C and fed to the water plus surfactant solution. The latter was controlled at 90°C. During this process high shear mixing of the water solution was carried out with a laboratory Silverson mixer with emulsion head. This high shear procedure produced asphaltic emulsions. Emulsions were prepared at 10% solids (asphalt or asphalt plus polymer) for study.

The neat asphalt emulsion and polymer A modified asphalt emulsion both separated within twenty-four hours. The neat asphalt emulsion separated by settling while the polymer A modified asphalt emulsion creamed. These observations can be explained by density differences between the phases.

Surprisingly, the polymer B modified asphalt emulsion was still homogeneous to the eye after 1 month. In addition, when thin film were cast from aged reshock (by hand) emulsions, only films from the polymer B modified asphalt emulsion were free of large particles.

It is postulated that the neat AC-5 asphalt particles are sticky enough to flocculate, the polymer A modified AC-5 particles do not have polymer at the surface but surfactant modified asphalt and are thus sticky enough to flocculate, while the polymer B modified AC-5 particles have polymer B at the surface and resist flocculation. Of course slow coalescence rather than flocculation may also be taking place and a method that would find it was not used. It is believed that soft asphalt and low poly-

mer content make coalescence easier.

Thin films of 0.5 mm (20 mils) of the polymer A and polymer B modified asphalts were cast from reshock (homogeneous to the eye) one month old emulsions and then dried at room temperatures. Polymer A modified asphalt films exhibited poor mechanical properties. They were difficult to remove from release paper without tearing. When tested in tensile testing they yielded at low elongation and then drew down. Their stress at break was negligible. Polymer B modified asphalt films were elastic in that they exhibited elastic recovery. They exhibited a high stress at break. It is postulated that although film coalescence did take place, there is not a great deal of molecular diffusion. Films prepared from polymer A modified asphalt emulsions are coalesced particles which have low molecular weight surfactant but no polymer at the surface. They will thus have properties like asphalt that does not contain polymer. In addition they will likely not be very water resistant. Films prepared from polymer B modified asphalt emulsions are coalesced particles which have polymer modified asphalt at the surface.

EXAMPLE 2

Example 1 was repeated except that a cationic surfactant package was used. 1.5% Jetco AE-12 (Jetco is a trade mark) together with 1% HCl in distilled water was prepared. Jetco AE-12 is a proprietary emulsifier which contains fatty amines and is available from Jetco Chemicals in Corsicana Texas. The Jetco AE-12 was added to a room temperature HCl solution. This mixture was heated to 55°C and stirred to melt and mix the Jetco AE-12. This water plus surfactant solution stays clear until it is cooled back to room temperature. Upon heating it becomes clear again.

Emulsions were prepared at 10 %w solids (asphalt plus polymer) using the two polymer modified asphalts from Example 1. The latter were fed at 160°C to the 85°C water plus surfactant solution.

Once again the polymer A modified asphalt emulsion creamed rapidly, this time within five minutes. The creamed phase was 40% by volume of the total emulsion. Upon cooling to room temperature, additional phases formed and separated into multiple layers. At the bottom of the emulsion a white grainy material could be seen. This is caused because Jetco AE-12 and its chlorine salt are not completely soluble in room temperature water.

Surprisingly, the polymer B modified asphalt cationic emulsion is very stable. It stayed homogeneous for two hours. At two hours a small amount of a dark (presumably asphalt rich) material creamed to the top. This creamed phase was less

than 1% by volume of the total emulsion. By 24 hours this creamed material had increased to about 2% by volume of the total emulsion. By 24 hours a light grainy phase, about 4% by volume of the total emulsion, had settled to the bottom of the emulsion. The appearance of the polymer B modified asphalt emulsion did not change after 24 hours.

Thin films of 0.5 mm (20 mils) of the polymer A and polymer B modified asphalts were cast from reshock (by hand; homogeneous to the eye) emulsions which had aged for more than 24 hours, and then dried at room temperature. Polymer A modified asphalt films exhibited poor mechanical properties. They broke at extremely low elongation. Polymer B modified asphalt films exhibited high elongation, elastic recovery and strength.

EXAMPLE 3

Example 2 was repeated except that emulsions were prepared at 50% solids (asphalt plus polymer). The polymer A modified asphalt emulsion was very poor in quality in that it was lumpy and not homogeneous. Roughly 30 %w of it was retained on a 10 mesh screen (very large mesh size). Clearly, this emulsion contained a large amount of polymer modified asphalt that was not emulsified. Surprisingly, the polymer B modified asphalt emulsion was smooth and homogeneous and passed easily through a 10 mesh screen.

Claims

1. A bitumen emulsion comprising
 - (a) bitumen,
 - (b) water,
 - (c) optionally at least one emulsifier, and
 - (d) a conjugated diene block copolymer containing functional groups which have a strong affinity for water.

2. The emulsion of claim 1 comprising:
 - (i) 5 to 90% by weight of the total emulsion of bitumen plus conjugated diene block copolymer, said conjugated diene block copolymer being present in an amount of from 0.005 to 20% by weight of bitumen plus polymer; and
 - (ii) 10 to 95% by weight of the total emulsion of emulsifier plus water, said emulsifier being present in an amount of from 0.001 to 10% by weight of emulsifier plus water.

3. The emulsion of claim 1 or 2, wherein the conjugated diene block copolymer comprises at least one conjugated diene block and at least one acrylic monomer block.

4. An emulsion according to claim 3, wherein the block copolymer also comprises at least one polymer block derived from a vinyl aromatic hydrocarbon.

5. The emulsion of claim 3 or 4, wherein the acrylic monomer block is a block of tertiary butyl methacrylate or a derivative thereof.

6. The emulsion of claim 1 or 2, wherein the conjugated diene block copolymer is a block copolymer wherein the functional groups are grafted onto the conjugated diene block of the polymer, said functional groups being present in an amount of from 0.5 to 30% by weight of the polymer.

7. The emulsion of claim 6, wherein the functional groups are selected from the group consisting of maleic anhydride and maleic acid groups.

8. The emulsion of claim 6 or 7, wherein the block copolymer is selectively hydrogenated.

9. The bituminous emulsion of any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the emulsifiers are selected from the group consisting of cationics, anionics, nonionics, bentonites and clays.

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Application Number

EP 93 20 0780

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim
X	GB-A-1 076 648 (BASF AG) 19 July 1967 * page 1, line 52 - line 64 * * page 2, line 51 - line 75 * * page 2, line 122 - page 3, line 20 * * example 4 *	1,2,4,6, 7,9
X	US-A-4 544 690 (D.J. LADISH) 1 October 1985 * column 2, line 38 - line 50 * * column 3, line 15 - line 20 * * column 4, line 14 - line 27 * * column 4, line 48 - line 53 * * column 5, line 59 - line 66 * * example 1 *	1-4,6,9
X	US-A-5 045 576 (J.S. ROECK; J.G. GALLOWAY; R.E. SNYDER) 3 September 1991 * column 3, line 40 - column 4, line 29 * * example 1 * * tables I,II *	1-4,6,9
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A	FR-A-2 125 444 (SHELL INTERNATIONALE RESEARCH MAATSCHAPPIJ N.V.) 29 September 1972 * claims 1,7 *	1-9
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims		
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE	24 JUNE 1993	GOERKE H.R.
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